



DCF Provider News: A Resource for Wisconsin Shares & YoungStar Providers

MyWIChildCare Updates

Brochures and Posters Now Available

The MyWIChildCare EBT Card initiative (MWCC) is on schedule for release in October 2016 for the Western Region Economic Assistance Area (WREA). WREA includes La Crosse, Buffalo, Clark, Jackson, Monroe, Trempealeau, Pepin, and Vernon counties. Counties not included in WREA are considered phase 2 counties. Phase 2 is scheduled for release in February of 2017.

The Department of Children and Families has developed informational brochures for parents and providers

that are now available for self-printing or ordering at the below website.

<http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/childcare/mywchildcare/order-mwcc-brochures.htm>

Provider and Parent Training

The Department of Children and Families and our EBT vendor, FIS, are providing a multimedia parent training video that will be available on the DCF MWCC website. The training video link will also be distributed widely to stakeholders, CCRRs, and local agencies for inclusion on their websites. The training is available at:

<http://paymenttraining.articulate-online.com/6342043222>

Providers should view the parent multimedia training to understand the new program from the parent perspective. FIS will also have quick reference guides for providers available in English, Spanish, and Hmong. Providers will be sent the quick reference guides after they have completed the contracting process with FIS.

There are two reference guides available. One will be sent to providers who choose to have an optional Point of Sale Device. The second one is specific to providers who prefer the online or telephone-based IVR system for payments.

<http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/childcare/mywchildcare>



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FIS Contracting Periods

Providers who wish to participate in the Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy program are required to sign an agreement with FIS. Providers will receive a notice from DCF with your new FIS Provider ID in the weeks prior to the contracting period. **The FIS contracts are not available to Wisconsin providers until the contracting period begins.** The phase 1 contracting period is from July 6, 2016 – September 15, 2016. Phase 2 contracting period is from September 15, 2016 – January 15, 2017.

FIS will contact Wisconsin providers when the contracting period begins in your location. Do not delay completing your contract. Providers who do not complete the contract prior to the deadline will see their parents notified that their provider is not participating and authorizations will be ended. Provider questions on the contracting process should be directed to FIS customer service line at 1-800-894-0050. The customer service number is staffed during regular business hours (8 a.m. - 5 p.m. CST) Monday through Friday.



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MyWIChildCare Updates *(continued from page 1)*



YoungStar Incentives Update

As you may know, MyWIChildCare is the new electronic benefits transfer (EBT) payment system for Wisconsin Shares, the state's child care subsidy program. MyWIChildCare is modeled after the private pay, free market child care system, and empowers parents to become more involved in selecting the best child care provider for their children. Phase 1 of MyWIChildCare will be implemented in the western region of the state beginning in October of this year. This includes the following counties: Buffalo, Clark, Jackson, Monroe, Pepin, Trempealeau, Vernon, and La Crosse. Phase 2 of MyWIChildCare will be implemented in February 2017. Phase 2 includes the rest of the state.

The Department of Children and Families has conducted extensive educational outreach to parents and providers over the past two years about MyWIChildCare. We have heard from providers that the move to MyWIChildCare will financially penalize some 4 and 5 Star programs. The

Department is committed to incentivizing providers to maintain their 4 and 5 Star levels. During the transition to MyWIChildCare, parents' EBT cards will be loaded with the Wisconsin Shares subsidy amount. If a parent chooses a 2 Star program, that amount will be decreased by 5% prior to being loaded on the card. Separately, the YoungStar adjustment for 4 and 5 Star programs will come from the MyWIChildCare vendor, FIS, in a payment directly to the programs. We believe this is a way to make 4 and 5 Star providers whole during the transition as we search for a more permanent solution to financially reward these high quality providers.

Get the latest YoungStar, Wisconsin Shares, and MyWIChildCare updates by subscribing to our email list!

Subscribe here:

<http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/childcare/cc-email-signup.htm>

Upcoming MyWIChildCare Parent Information Sessions

MyWIChildCare Is Coming – Help DCF Spread the Word

As many of you are already aware, DCF is implementing significant changes around the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy program. We need your help providing information about the coming changes to the families that you serve. YoungStar has encouraged many of your programs to consider sharing a newsletter with your families on a number of different topics. DCF is offering short informational pieces that could be included in your newsletters to help us get information out to your families during this important transition period.

The text to the right highlighted the upcoming parent information sessions being offered throughout the state. **Please share this information with your Wisconsin Shares families.**

DCF is holding parent information sessions across the state. These information sessions are specific to what the parents receiving Wisconsin Shares subsidy will need to know about MyWIChildCare. Some highlights of each session are on paying your provider, child care need and utilization, quarterly notices, authorization backdating, and new reporting requirements. The scheduled sessions are:

September 24, 2016 in Superior, WI
October 13, 2016 in Appleton, WI
October 22, 2016 in Madison, WI
November 3, 2016 in Milwaukee, WI
November 12, 2016 in Kenosha, WI
November 14, 2016 in Wausau, WI
December 8, 2016 in Milwaukee, WI

For complete details, including times and exact locations about a session near you, please contact your local CCR&R <http://supportingfamiliesaltogether.org/child-care-resource-referral-agencies/>





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YoungStar Update: Is Your Program Even or Odd?



Beginning in 2017, programs participating in YoungStar will only need to be rated every two years. This will give programs more time to improve their quality between ratings. All currently participating program sites were divided between even year and odd year rating groups in July, 2016. Programs were divided through a computer generated system that took a variety of factors into consideration. Even year and odd year rating assignments were mailed to programs in August. Note that programs are **not** able to change which rating group they are assigned to.

Not sure if your program was assigned to the even or odd year rating assignment? Contact your local YoungStar office, which can be found at:
<http://dcf.wi.gov/youngstar/localoffice.htm>.

Once you know your assigned rating group, here is what you can expect.

My program is an ODD: You can expect to get a new two-year renewal contract 3-4 months before your anniversary month in 2017. This two-year YoungStar renewal contract must be completed and returned to your local YoungStar office by the first day of your 2017 anniversary month in order to continue to receive Wisconsin Shares payments. You will continue to receive official YoungStar renewal contracts, which must be submitted to continue participation, every two years (2019, 2021, 2023, etc).

My program is an EVEN: You can expect to get a one-time, one-year only YoungStar contract 3-4 months before your anniversary month in 2017. This contract must be completed and returned to your local YoungStar office by the first day of your 2017 anniversary month in order to continue to receive Wisconsin Shares payments. Even though the contract must be returned, your program is not required to complete a rating in 2017. You will get the new, official two-year renewal contract 3-4 months in advance of your 2018 anniversary month to begin your required rating cycle. You will continue to receive official YoungStar renewal contracts, which must be submitted to continue participation, every two years (2020, 2022, 2024, etc.).

Although ratings will not be required every year, programs are encouraged to receive free YoungStar support services during their "off" rating years. On these "off" years, beginning in 2018, programs will receive a "Request for Off-Year Services" application 3-4 months

before their anniversary month. This application will allow programs to request services, if desired. Programs can receive just technical consultation and a micro-grant, just a rating, or all three services! Note that programs that choose to be rated on their "off-year" will stay on the same even or odd rating track. This means that the program will receive a rating at least three (3) years in a row (on year rating, off year rating, on year rating).

With the move to every other year ratings, and the change to MyWICChildCare/parent pay, beginning in September 2016 programs will only have their star rating calculated once per month. This is a change from the weekly rating checks we do now. The YoungStar system will calculate ratings for all programs on the evening of the 15th of each month. Accompanying tiered reimbursement changes will go into effect on the first of the following month. So, if you expect your star rating to increase, you should work with your technical consultant to make sure that your rating is completed as quickly as possible, and before the 14th of the month.

Date program rating is complete and entered by consultant	Rating calculated	Tiered reimbursement changes (if any)
1 st -15 th of month	Evening of the 15 th same month	1 st of the following month
Example: The program is rated on January 10 and the rating is entered into the YoungStar database on January 12. The new rating is calculated after 9 p.m. on January 15, and the star level reimbursement level that accompanies the January 10 rating will begin February 1.		
16 th - end of the month	Evening of the 15 th of the following month	1 st of the month, 2 months after the rating completion
Example: The program is rated on January 15 and the rating is entered into the YoungStar database on January 16. The new rating is calculated after 9 p.m. on February 15, and the star level reimbursement level that accompanies the January 15 rating will begin March 1.		





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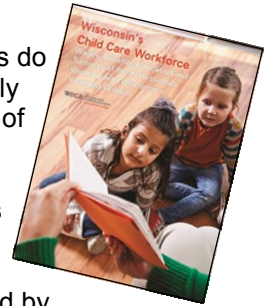
Just Released - A Wisconsin Child Care Workforce Study

With funding from the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families, Wisconsin Early Childhood Association (WECA) has released a new child care workforce study: *Wisconsin's Child Care Workforce: Wages, Benefits, Education and Turnover of the Professionals Working with Wisconsin's Youngest Children*.

The report reflects data collected in fall of 2015 by the Survey Center with data analysis by COWS – the Center on Wisconsin Strategy – both based at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The findings offer a detailed look at the workforce with YoungStar in full implementation. The survey sample is representative of star levels of Wisconsin child care programs (birth to five).

Additionally, a national study by the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has also just been released which has similar findings on low wages of child care workers. (<http://tinyurl.com/zkcpqlp>)

Wisconsin's study results show that centers with higher YoungStar ratings do pay slightly better, employ more highly educated staff, and have lower rates of turnover. However, when comparing these results with the Wisconsin workforce as a whole, the study finds that these positive results are insufficient to sustain quality improvements over time as evidenced by unacceptably high turnover rates and the strain on program resources reported by child care center directors.



The full report, an executive summary, and insights and recommendations from WECA are all available at <http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/2016-report/>.

TOP 3 REASONS To Complete Your Business Information Form (BIF) As a WI Child Care Provider

(Now in a NEW and Improved electronic format)



If you are a Wisconsin child care provider, then completing your Business Information Form (BIF) on at least an annual basis makes good business sense. It benefits your business by keeping your program information current, making it easier for you to fill vacancies and for families to access care at your program.

The good news? Completing your BIF just got a little easier! Starting in late summer 2016, a new electronic BIF will be available to providers through their local CCR&R.

Learn more about the electronic BIF and the top 3 reasons to complete your BIF here:
<https://magic.piktochart.com/output/14197773-top-3-reasons-to-complete-your-bif>





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YoungStar Transition

In May of 2015, the WI Department of Children and Families (DCF) issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the administration of YoungStar, Wisconsin's Child Care Quality Rating and Improvement System. Supporting Families Together Association (SFTA) was selected by DCF through the RFP process to administer all YoungStar services, and began doing so on July 1, 2016.

SFTA is Wisconsin's statewide member association for organizations and individuals committed to making every early childhood a great one (<http://supportingfamiliesaltogether.org/>). Their core membership consists of WI Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (CCR&Rs) and Family Resource Centers (FRCs), (<http://tinyurl.com/zkauarw>). SFTA provides services and supports, including program management, quality assurance and improvement, organizational development, professional development, systems building and professional networking. SFTA has been with YoungStar since the beginning, serving as the fiscal agent and subcontracting services to Wisconsin's 10 CCR&Rs under the previous YoungStar contract. As such, SFTA has an expansive knowledge of YoungStar and its implementation and is an active partner in working with DCF to continuously improve service delivery.

What does this transition look like, and what does it mean for providers?

SFTA, the local YoungStar offices, and DCF are working together to make necessary transitions as smooth as possible. The primary point to keep in mind during this transition is that our goal is to provide you with high quality YoungStar services. We are implementing quality improvements aimed to create efficient and responsive processes throughout YoungStar. Here are a few changes you can expect to see:

- Your Technical Consultants (TCs) will be your navigator through YoungStar moving forward, coordinating with SFTA across all YoungStar services. TCs will continue to support providers in determining how to use micro-grants and in professional development.

- SFTA is now processing all micro-grants, whether this is purchasing items or processing reimbursements.
- Starting July 1, 2016, if you are going through the formal rating process, your TC will score the YoungStar Evaluation Criteria for your program. SFTA's Environment Rating Scale (ERS) Observers will only complete the required Environment Rating Scales for each rating. Your TC and the ERS Observer will collaborate during the final consultation to give you thorough and meaningful feedback to draw upon your strengths and support you in your future quality improvement efforts.
- 4C for Children is the local YoungStar office for Milwaukee County, meaning 4C for Children will provide all technical consultation services in the

county and will now accept all YoungStar Contracts or Renewals for Milwaukee County. If you have already sent your contract or renewal to the Wisconsin Early Childhood Association, it's not a problem. 4C for Children will work to process your paperwork and get your services started.

For effective statewide implementation of YoungStar as this transition occurs, SFTA will manage and evaluate processes and outcomes, coordinate

professional development for YoungStar staff, and ensure quality of services by joining TCs and ERS Observers periodically on visits to child care programs. SFTA will be available to quickly process provider requests and answer any questions that arise through this transition. Providers can contact SFTA at 888-713-KIDS (5437).

New transition information will be shared with child care providers statewide via the YoungStar listserv, the YoungStar website (<http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/transition.htm>) and through YoungStar stakeholder groups. Sign up to receive YoungStar emails here http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/mailling_list/signup.htm.



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Family Engagement in Child Care Programs & Parent Cafés

Family engagement is a hot topic in the early childhood field. Engaging parents and caregivers in their child's early development and education strengthens the parent/child bond and improves a child's lifelong outcomes. Because child care programs participating in YoungStar that are above a 2 Star are required to earn points for family engagement practices starting in 2017, providers are particularly focused on engaging families with the support of their YoungStar Technical Consultant (TC).



"A family child care provider attended a family engagement training in Hayward and completed their application for extra hours of family engagement technical consultation. One of

the ideas that the provider wanted to work on with their TC was to create a lending library using the extra books the program had. Upon completion of TC visits, parents were able to check out materials at this program."

Northwest Connection Family Resources, Hayward

From July 1, 2015 through the end of May 2016, nearly 552 hours of onsite family engagement technical consultation were completed by TCs with over 190 unique providers. There have also been almost 50 family engagement trainings across Wisconsin to date, giving child care providers tools and strategies to implement family engagement in ways that work best for their program. So far, over 240 child care providers have applied to receive additional technical consultation surrounding family engagement.

"We had very meaningful conversations helping providers make the transition to see family engagement as more than just an open house," said one TC from 4-C in Madison.

Local Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) agencies like 4-C, which are also the local YoungStar offices, are working to engage families directly with Parent Cafés. These small-group gatherings for parents/caregivers explore the Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors that have been shown to help prevent child abuse and

neglect. Participants can grow in their confidence as caregivers, and are prepared to lead Parent Cafés in their communities, sustaining the practice and empowering parents. You can hear directly from parent participants about their Parent Café experience in these brief videos:

- Gary, Green Bay: <http://tinyurl.com/gugjauq>
- Victoria, Hayward: <http://tinyurl.com/zf7bk75>

To date, 72 Parent Café sessions have occurred thanks to CCR&Rs, Family Resource Centers (FRCs), community partners, statewide coordination by Supporting Families Together Association (SFTA) and funding from the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF). Over 500 unduplicated parents/caregivers participated in Parent Cafés and 115 were recruited as parent hosts. Family engagement efforts in Parent Cafés and child care programs have proven symbiotic. Available child care at Parent Café sessions is not only helpful to participants, it may support participating child care programs in earning the required YoungStar Family Engagement point.

Family Connections of SWWI in Platteville has also created Parent Café toolkits that providers and other partners can use for Parent Café implementation. These cross-over efforts are indicative of potential partnerships across the field in family engagement, and of a larger statewide trend towards increasing family engagement in early childhood services.

Fingerprint Requirement for New Employees



Providers who have hired a new employee who has already completed the one-time fingerprint requirement can either have the employee request their results from the previous employer, or have the employee sign in to their Fieldprint account and print the confirmation page. The confirmation page will show proof that the one time fingerprint requirement has been completed and should be kept in the staff file.

Licensing and certification staff are continuing to check for fingerprint compliance during site visits and providers who are not in compliance are at risk of losing their Wisconsin Shares authorizations and YoungStar participation status.





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Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Screen Time Revised for 2017

Beginning in 2017, providers will see new language in the YoungStar Evaluation Criteria for indicators in D.1.1 and D.1.2 of the Health and Wellbeing component.

Childhood obesity has more than doubled in children and quadrupled in adolescents in the past 30 years. As children who are considered obese age and grow into adults who may be obese, they are more at risk for adult health problems such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, stroke, several types of cancer, and osteoarthritis (<http://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/obesity/facts.htm>). Children grow at different rates, so it isn't always easy to know when a child is obese or overweight. A child's health care provider can determine if a child's weight and height are in a healthy range. The good news is that obesity is preventable and reversible with lifestyle modification, including healthy eating and physical activity. History has shown that education and motivation are powerful tools in creating lasting change. Consider how attitudes toward recycling, seat belts, and bike helmets have evolved in the past generation.

Through the work and continuous review of YoungStar quality indicators by the Wisconsin Early Childhood Obesity Prevention Initiative (WECOPi), which includes the Departments of Health Services, Public Instruction and Children and Families and representatives from the various stakeholders in both early care and education and school-age programming, YoungStar is integrating childhood physical activity and healthy nutrition efforts for the purposes of modification in practices and the prevention of obesity.

YoungStar Technical Consultants are ready now to help programs begin their work to implement these quality indicators in their program.

Previously, D.1.1 was a quality indicator requiring programs to serve nutritious meals, snacks and beverages and was required for 3, 4 and 5 Star programs. Also included was the participation in Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), which included mandatory participation in CACFP-related training opportunities. Alternatively, the program could demonstrate that they provide well-balanced meals, snacks and beverages daily. This has been modified for 2017.

D.1.1, Program supports healthy nutrition and/or physical activity policies and practices. This indicator

will continue to be required for 3, 4 and 5 Star programs. The indicator has been changed to encourage programs to implement policies and practices in nutrition and/or physical activity. The policies and practices will be based on nationally recognized self-assessment tools (NAP SACC and OSNAP), as well as state-developed self-assessments (10 Steps to Breastfeeding Friendly Child Care Centers and the Wisconsin Youth Garden Self-Assessment designed by WECOPi/Community Groundworks).

Programs will use a YoungStar-identified Self-Assessment tool(s) and may choose to use more than one self-assessment if a program wishes to work on both nutrition and physical activity practices and policies. The nutrition area can cover gardening, nutrition practices/policies and/or breastfeeding friendly program designs.

The physical activity area will address quality improvement in policies and practices for supporting environment, policy and individual interventions to support young children. The program will need to list three specific goals for nutrition and/or physical activity on the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). The action steps, timeline for completion, and persons responsible for accomplishing the goal must be included in the QIP. The program will have policies and procedures onsite to address children's allergies and dietary restrictions. If the program allows meals, snacks, or beverages to be brought from home, the program's policies will state the program will supplement the meals, snacks and beverages if the meals/snacks/beverages do not meet the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines.

D.1.2, Program supports physical skill development and healthy physical activity. The intent of this is to help programs improve physical activity practices in the environment and to support children's physical skill development. This indicator has been designed for programs to be intentional to support the developmental expectation that children in Wisconsin are provided with increasingly complex and diverse opportunities to develop and refine their use of small and gross motor skills. The activities, which are designed around minimum time parameters from the recommendations of the Institute of Medicine, are verified based on the age groups served. The time allotments have increased from 60 minutes to 90

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minutes per day for children 3 years and older.

Limiting Use of TV, Computers, and Mobile Devices: Screen Time

New screen time language has been included in the YoungStar Evaluation Criteria for 2017. The Institute of Medicine has recommendations for maximum times that should be spent in front of screens while the children are attending a child care program. "Screen time" is a term used for activities done in front of a screen such as watching TV, working on a computer, playing video games, or using tablets and handheld devices. Screen time is sedentary activity, meaning a child is being physically inactive while sitting down.

Very little energy is used during screen time. Most American children spend about 3 hours per day watching TV. Added together, all types of screen time can total 5-7 hours a day. Too much screen time can make it hard for a child to sleep at night. It may raise a child's risk of attention problems, anxiety, and depression. A child can be at risk of becoming obese. TV commercials and other screen ads can also lead to unhealthy food choices. These food ads that are aimed at kids are high in sugar, salt, or fats. Children eat more when they are watching TV, especially if they see ads for food. For older children, computers can help kids with their schoolwork. However, surfing the internet, spending too much time on Facebook, or watching YouTube videos is considered unhealthy screen time.

Current screen time guidelines are:

- Children under age 2 should have no screen time.
- Children 3 and older - Limit screen time to no more than 30 minutes per week while in child care.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that television and other entertainment media should be avoided for infants and children under age 2. A child's brain develops rapidly during these first years, and young children learn best by interacting with *people*, not screens. As children get older, too much screen time can interfere with being physically active, reading, doing homework, playing with friends, and spending time with family.

Your YoungStar Technical Consultant is ready to help with understanding and implementing the screen time language of the indicator. Additional information can be found at the Healthy Kids Healthy Future website (<http://www.hkhsf.org>).

tinyurl.com/juwjbaq). The site contains information for supporting children, teachers, and families in reducing screen time and includes a children's activities section, resources, success stories from child care programs, and a Screen-Time Reduction Toolkit for Child Care Providers.

Draft 2017 YoungStar Evaluation Criteria Available

The YoungStar quality indicators for 2017-2018 are available to preview. The version available at the link below will be used for any programs with anniversary dates January 1, 2017-December 31, 2018. New programs that apply for YoungStar for the first time on or after January 1, 2017 will also be rated using these criteria. <http://tinyurl.com/zssh5h2>

The drafts will be revised monthly until October 2016. The final versions of the documents will be published on or before November 1, 2016. Note that these criteria will be used for two years. Read about the change to YoungStar, which moves rating to every other year beginning in 2017, in your summer DCF Provider Newsletter on page 3.

Spanish versions of the Family and Group criteria will be available when the criteria are finalized in the fall of 2016. A document outlining the changes to YoungStar for 2017 has been

developed to help providers who are renewing their YoungStar Contracts: Changes to YoungStar for 2017. <http://tinyurl.com/zssh5h2>

Changes to YoungStar for 2017/2018		
June 24, 2016 Draft		
The items outlined in this document are clarifications or modifications that will be made to YoungStar for 2017/2018 implementation. These will be effective for any program that applies to YoungStar on or after January 1, 2017 or whose anniversary date is in 2017 or 2018.		
General Clarifications That Apply to All YS Programs		
Category	Indicator	Clarification
General	Rating Frequency	Programs will be required to be rated every other year with the option of an annual rating, if requested by the program. Rating criteria will change every other year as well. This addresses the concern by programs that they are evaluated too often and are required to provide too much paperwork.
General	Age Group Selections for Indicators	Beginning in 2017, in the Group evaluation criteria, classroom selection for indicators that need verification will be for the following age groups: birth - 35 months, 36 - 60 months, and school-age. In DayCamp evaluation criteria, the group selection for indicators that need verification will be for the following age groups: 3 - 4 year olds (if enrolled), 5 years - and older.
Learning Environment and Curriculum		No substantive changes.
Business and Professional Practices		No substantive changes.
Family Engagement	C-5.1-5 Family Engagement	The examples in the activities have either been clarified or modified to better meet the program type. Beginning in 2017, 3 Star programs are required to achieve 1 point, 4 and 5 Star programs are required to achieve 2 points.
Health and Wellbeing	D.1.1 Healthy nutrition and/or physical activity policies and practices	This indicator is changing from using CACFP participation and menu review to requiring programs to utilize a process of self-assessment in the areas of nutrition and/or physical activity. This indicator is required for 3, 4 and 5 Stars.
	D.1.2 Physical skill development and healthy physical activity	This indicator has been modified to increase the amount of physical activity time required to earn the point and also to give programs more flexibility in demonstrating how they are meeting the intent of this indicator. The indicator also will address screen time per day while children are at the program.
Environment Rating Scales Clarifications for 2017/2018 The updated notes for clarification on the Environment Rating Scale Institute website are used to update the Notes for Clarification and are used for scoring throughout 2017/2018. The Clarifications are located at: https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/enst.htm		





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Supporting Teen Parents

Being a new parent can be a scary thing, but being a teen parent can be especially unnerving because there may be many things that teen parents do not know about caring for their child. Teen parents may not know how to provide a safe and healthy environment for their child. They may not know how to support the child's growth and development and they may not know what resources are available in their community to help them be the best parent they can be.

Child care providers can be a great resource for teen parents to learn more about how to provide a safe and rich environment for their child. You can help provide valuable knowledge to help teen parents better care for their child and lessen the fear that they may have by connecting them to resources that are available in their community. Here is some important information that you can share with teen parents.

Health and Safety

It is important to share information with teen parents about how to keep their child safe and healthy. Inform and share information with them that babies should sleep in a crib and not in the parents' bed. The baby should also be placed to sleep on their back. To decrease the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), the crib should have no covers, pillows, bumper pads, blankets, or positioning devices. Parents should also actively supervise small children so that they can see and reach them at all times and be able to respond to their needs.

They should also provide a safe environment that doesn't have any dangling cords, sharp corners, or small toys that can cause danger. In addition, teen parents also need to know how to keep their child healthy. They should maintain regular doctor's visits to make sure that their child is growing properly. They also need to make sure that they always check food temperatures so it is not too hot for the child. Feeding their child age-appropriate healthy foods will ensure that their child gets the proper nutrition they need to grow and develop. Knowing and

doing these practices will help keep their child safe and healthy. For more resources on health and safety direct them to the Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center for Early Childhood Health and Wellness website:

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/health>

Growth and Development

Tell teen parents that they are their child's first and most important teacher. One of the best ways to help their child grow and develop is to talk and play with them every day. Talking to their child will help build their vocabulary and improve their communication skills. Reading is a great way to get their child interested in books and learning new things. They should provide lots of opportunities for play

that will stimulate the child's social, emotional, cognitive, and physical abilities.

Encourage the child to explore their surroundings. There is no such thing as giving your child too much love and affection so hug them and tell them you love them every day. They should also praise their child for the good things that the child is doing and encourage positive behavior. They can watch for milestones and consult with their health care provider if they have any concerns. Here is a website from the University of Wisconsin-Madison you can share with teen

parents about the developmental stages of infants and children: <http://tinyurl.com/jks3yhr>

Community Resources

It is a good rule of thumb to have information and brochures available about community resources for families in your program. These resources may be especially useful for teen parents. If you don't already have information on community resources, contact your local child care resource and referral (CCR&R) agency or family resource center for resources and information that you can give to teen parents. There are lots of great programs and resources for teen parents to learn more about parenting, finishing high school, and providing for their child. Furthermore, school districts also have great

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resources and programs for teen parents. It is important that teen parents know the kinds of support that are available to them in the community to help them be successful. For more teen parents resources, refer to the following websites:

- Department of Children and Families
<http://tinyurl.com/h4fckwf>
- Department of Public Instruction
<http://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/school-age-parent>
- Find your school district below
<http://wisconsin.hometownlocator.com/schools/>

Remember that you can make a difference in both the lives of the children you are caring for and the parents of those children by being the resource and support that they need to learn how to be the best parent they can be. Engage and partner with your families to talk about ways to support their child's health, safety, growth, and development at home. Equally important, share resources and information with families about programs and resources in the community that can help them be successful parents.

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Participation

Do you want to make a lasting impact on the health and wellness of those in your care? Would you like to offer healthier meals and snacks? Would you like to receive funding to supplement the cost of serving healthy meals and snacks?

You may want to consider applying for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The CACFP is a federally funded voluntary program that helps pay for the cost of serving healthy meals and snacks to participants in qualifying facilities. The CACFP also improves the quality of care and makes it more affordable for many low-income families.

Why should your program participate in the CACFP?

Overall, wellness is an important part of providing quality care for participants. Healthy eating and physical activity are two components of wellness that are encouraged by the CACFP. Through resources and educational opportunities offered, programs can increase daily movement, plan healthy menus, and improve the overall nutrition and physical activity environments in their facility. In addition, CACFP participation:

- Provides funding to supplement the cost of

healthy meals and snacks

- Teaches children at an early age a healthier way of eating that will last a lifetime
- Gives parents and caregivers confidence knowing that you are invested in the health and well-being of their children
- Offers guidance in menu planning and recipe ideas
- Offers technical assistance and consultation to assist in your program's success

Who can participate?

Licensed Child Care Centers (CCC) and Head Start programs that serve meals and/or snacks to infants and children through age 12 can be reimbursed for up to two meals and one snack or two snacks and one meal per child, per day.

Family Day Care Home (FDCH) Providers that are licensed or certified with infants and/or children through age 12 may be reimbursed for up to two meals and one snack or two snacks and one meal per child, per day. Family providers participate through an approved sponsoring organization. If you are a family provider interested in joining the CACFP, please go to the CACFP Wisconsin Sponsors



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CACFP Participation continued from page 10

Forum website (http://www.foodprogramwi.org/about_us.phtml) to determine which sponsor covers your area. Contact the sponsor directly to learn more about participation in the CACFP.

For additional information on the CACFP, you may watch the CACFP Introduction Webcast and refer to the CACFP Information Sheets. Both can be found on the CACFP New Agency webpage (<http://dpi.wi.gov/community-nutrition/cacfp/newagency>)

How Group Centers Apply

1. Visit the CACFP New Agency webpage referenced above.
2. The first step in the application process is to determine if your center is eligible for the CACFP by completing the CACFP Eligibility Assessment found on the CACFP New Agency webpage. If your agency qualifies, you must watch online Webcast Trainings and complete a Webcast Test.
3. After your agency passes the Webcast Test, you may register for the two-day New Agency training. It is recommended that the individual who prepares the meals and the person responsible for the CACFP attend the training. If you are a For Profit center, the owner must also attend training.
4. The two-day training covers the requirements of the CACFP, provides hands-on activities, and answers questions about the program. After the two-day training, programs start implementing the CACFP requirements and complete an online contract. Once you have operated the CACFP for one month and your online contract is complete, you will receive an on-site visit from a CACFP consultant to determine if your agency is ready to be approved for CACFP participation.

The next three months of training dates can be found on the CACFP New Agency webpage. We look forward to working with your center!



MECA Corner

(Milwaukee County Providers Only)

Inclusion Credential Class

An Inclusion Credential class (Special Health Care Needs) is scheduled for Saturdays in Milwaukee for the following dates in 2017: January: 7, 14, 21, 28 and February: 4, 11.

A T.E.A.C.H. scholarship may be used by students who meet the eligibility criteria to take these courses. Please contact Ann Farah with the Special Needs Support Program for more information at 414-289-6977 or by email: ann.farah@wisconsin.gov. Complete course details are available online <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/childcare/meca/pdf/2016/2016fall-2017spring-snsp-schedule.pdf>

MECA Certification Has Moved

The Certification Unit of Milwaukee Early Care Administration has relocated from their office in Milwaukee to the Waukesha State Office Building located at 141 NW Barstow Street, Room 104 Waukesha, WI 53188. The certification phone number has been changed. Call 262-521-5100 to reach a certification specialist.

Public School Operated Child Care Programs that are exempt from licensing will be monitored for compliance with health and safety standards on an annual basis beginning November, 2016. More information will be sent to these programs in the near future.





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Special Needs Support Program Class Schedule—Fall 2016—Spring 2017

Date	Class	Description
September 10 Session One 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. September 17 Session Two 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. September 24 Session Three 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. October 8 Session Four 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. October 15 Session Five 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. October 22 Session Six 8 a.m. – 3 p.m.	<p>ECE: Children With Differing Abilities Course #84553</p> <p>Terri Schmidt Enters WI Birth to 3/Part C Coordinator Department of Health Services</p> <p>Cost: \$425.85</p> <p>These classes are for college credit! Attendance at all six sessions is required to receive credit. Register with NWTC: 1-888-385-6982</p>	<p>For a provider to be responsive to the needs of children based on cultural or developmental differences, the provider must examine their own histories, experiences, attitudes and beliefs. Society changes rapidly. Even the language used follows trends that shape how individuals respond to others. To be aware of others, providers must begin with an awareness of self:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differing abilities in early childhood settings. • Anti-bias perspectives, inclusion practices, understanding of ADA/IDEA federal laws. • Typical and exceptional development; physical, cognitive, health/medical, communication, behavioral and emotional disorders; community and professional resources. • Individual Education Program (IEP) and Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP); adapting curriculum; and cultivating partnerships.
January 7 Session One 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. January 14 Session Two 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. January 21 Session Three 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. January 28 Session Four 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. February 4 Session Five 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. February 11 Session Six 8 a.m. – 3 p.m.	<p>ECE: Special Health Care Needs Course # 24247</p> <p>Terri Schmidt Enters WI Birth to 3/Part C Coordinator Department of Health Services</p> <p>Cost: \$425.85</p> <p>These classes are for college credit! Attendance at all six sessions is required to receive credit. Register with NWTC: 1-888-385-6982</p>	<p>These classes meet the needs of early care and education professionals by promoting confidence and providing resources to those caring for children with special health care needs. Students will be trained on the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequently encountered specialized health care needs of individuals. • Recognizing family as the expert; roles of health care professionals and program staff; community resources. • Understanding educational implications and adaptive strategies; health promotion; care of individuals with altered body systems. • Emergency management for various health conditions and support systems. Wrap up of Special Health Care Needs course.

